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Advancement of women

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Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the obligation of all States to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and reaffirming also that discrimination on the basis of sex is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[1] and other international human rights instruments, and that its elimination is an integral part of efforts towards the elimination of all forms of violence against women,

Reaffirming also the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women,[2] the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[3] the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[4] and the

[1] Resolution 34/180, annex.
[2] See resolution 48/104.
[3] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.
[4] Resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S/23/3, annex.

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Declaration adopted at the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women,[5]

Reaffirming further the international commitments in the field of social development and to gender equality and the advancement of women made at the World Conference on Human Rights, the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development and the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, as well as those made in the United Nations Millennium Declaration[6] and at the 2005 World Summit,

Recalling all its previous resolutions on the elimination of violence against women and on the in-depth study on all forms of violence against women, and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000 on women and peace and security,

Recalling also resolution 2005/41 of 19 April 2005 of the Commission on Human Rights on the elimination of violence against women,

Recalling further the inclusion of gender-related crimes and crimes of sexual violence in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,

Recognizing that violence against women is rooted in historically unequal power relations between men and women and that all forms of violence against women seriously violate and impair or nullify the enjoyment by women of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and constitute a major impediment to the ability of women to make use of their capabilities,

Recognizing also that women's poverty and lack of empowerment, as well as their marginalization resulting from their exclusion from social policies and from the benefits of sustainable development, can place them at increased risk of violence,

Recognizing further that violence against women impedes the social and economic development of communities and States, as well as the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Recognizing the serious immediate and long-term implications for health, including sexual and reproductive health, as well as an increased vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, and the negative impact on psychological, social and economic development that violence against women represents for individuals, families, communities and States,

Deeply concerned about the pervasiveness of all forms of violence against women and girls in different forms and manifestations worldwide, and reiterating the need to intensify efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls throughout the world,

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[5] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 7* (E/2005/27), chap. I, para. 1.

[6] See resolution 55/2.

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the in-depth study on violence against women,[7] and having considered with interest the recommendations contained therein,

1. *Recognizes* that violence against women and girls persists in every country in the world as a pervasive violation of the enjoyment of human rights and a major impediment to achieving gender equality, development and peace;

2. *Welcomes* the efforts and important contributions at the local, national, regional and international levels to eliminate all forms of violence against women, and takes note with appreciation of the work done by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences;

3. *Stresses* that "violence against women" means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life;

4. *Strongly condemns* all acts of violence against women and girls, whether these acts are perpetrated by the State, by private persons or by non-State actors, and calls for the elimination of all forms of gender-based violence in the family, within the general community and where perpetrated or condoned by the State, and stresses the need to treat all forms of violence against women and girls as a criminal offence, punishable by law;

5. *Stresses* that challenges and obstacles remain in the implementation of international standards and norms to address the inequality between men and women and violence against women in particular, and pledges to intensify action to ensure their full and accelerated implementation;

6. *Stresses also* that States have the obligation to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls and must exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish the perpetrators of violence against women and girls and to provide protection to the victims, and that failure to do so violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms;

7. *Urges* States to take action to eliminate all forms of violence against women by means of a more systematic, comprehensive, multisectoral and sustained approach, adequately supported and facilitated by strong institutional mechanisms and financing, through national action plans, including those supported by international cooperation and, where appropriate, national development plans, including poverty eradication strategies and programme-based and sector-wide approaches, and to this end to:

(a) Ensure that all human rights and fundamental freedoms are respected and protected;

(b) Consider ratifying or acceding to all human rights treaties, including as a particular matter of priority, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[8] and its Optional Protocol,[8] limit the extent of any

[7] A/61/122/Add.1.

[8] Resolution 54/4, annex.

reservations that they lodge and regularly review such reservations with a view to withdrawing them so as to ensure that no reservation is incompatible with the object and purpose of the relevant treaty;

(c) Review and, where appropriate, revise, amend or abolish all laws, regulations, policies, practices and customs that discriminate against women or have a discriminatory impact on women, and ensure that provisions of multiple legal systems, where they exist, comply with international human rights obligations, commitments and principles, including the principle of non-discrimination;

(d) Exercise leadership to end all forms of violence against women and support advocacy in this regard at all levels, including at the local, national, regional and international levels, and by all sectors, especially by political and community leaders, as well as the public and private sectors, the media and civil society;

(e) Empower women, particularly poor women, through, inter alia, social and economic policies that guarantee them full and equal access to all levels of quality education and training and to affordable and adequate public and social services, as well as full and equal rights to own land and other property, and to take further appropriate measures to address the increasing rate of homelessness or inadequate housing for women in order to reduce their vulnerability to violence;

(f) Take positive measures to address structural causes of violence against women and to strengthen prevention efforts that address discriminatory practices and social norms, including with regard to women who need special attention in the development of policies to address violence, such as women belonging to minority groups, including those based on nationality, ethnicity, religion or language, indigenous women, migrant women, stateless women, women living in underdeveloped, rural or remote communities, homeless women, women in institutions or in detention, women with disabilities, elderly women, widows and women who are otherwise discriminated against;

(g) Ensure that diverse strategies that take into account the intersection of gender with other factors are developed in order to eradicate all forms of violence against women;

(h) Exercise due diligence to prevent all acts of violence against women, including by improving the safety of public environments;

(i) End impunity for violence against women, by prosecuting and punishing all perpetrators, by ensuring that women have equal protection of the law and equal access to justice and by holding up to public scrutiny and eliminating those attitudes that foster, justify or tolerate violence;

(j) Condemn violence against women and refrain from invoking any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligations with respect to its elimination as set out in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women;[2]

(k) Strengthen national health and social infrastructure to reinforce measures to promote women's equal access to public health and address the health consequences of violence against women, including by providing support to victims;

(l) Recognize that gender inequalities and all forms of violence against women and girls increase their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and ensure that women can exercise their right to have control over, and decide freely and responsibly on,

matters related to their sexuality in order to increase their ability to protect themselves from HIV infection, including their sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence;

(m) Ensure that men and women and boys and girls have access to education and literacy programmes and are educated on gender equality and human rights, particularly women's rights and their responsibility to respect the rights of others, inter alia, by integrating women's rights into all appropriate curricula and by developing gender-sensitive teaching materials and classroom practices, especially for early childhood education;

(n) Provide training and capacity-building on gender equality and women's rights for, inter alia, health workers, teachers, law enforcement personnel, military personnel, social workers, the judiciary, community leaders and the media;

(o) Promote awareness and information campaigns on women's rights and the responsibility to respect them, including in rural areas, and encourage men and boys to speak out strongly against violence against women;

(p) Protect women and girls in situations of armed conflict, post-conflict settings and refugee and internally displaced persons settings, where women are at greater risk of being targeted for violence and where their ability to seek and receive redress is often restricted, bearing in mind that peace is inextricably linked with equality between women and men and development, that armed and other types of conflicts and terrorism and hostage-taking still persist in many parts of the world and that aggression, foreign occupation and ethnic and other types of conflicts are an ongoing reality affecting women and men in nearly every region, undertake efforts to eliminate impunity for all gender-based violence in situations of armed conflict, bearing in mind Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security and adopt, consistent with their obligations under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees[9] and its 1967 Protocol,[10] international human rights norms and relevant conclusions of the Executive Committee of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and General Assembly resolutions, a gender-sensitive approach to the consideration of claims for granting of asylum and refugee status;

(q) Integrate a gender perspective into national plans of action and establish or strengthen specific national plans of action on the elimination of violence against women, supported by the necessary human, financial and technical resources, including, where appropriate, time-bound measurable targets, to promote the protection of women against any form of violence, and accelerate the implementation of existing national action plans that are regularly monitored and updated by Governments, taking into account inputs by civil society, in particular women's organizations, networks and other stakeholders;

(r) Allocate adequate resources to promote the empowerment of women and gender equality and to prevent and redress all forms and manifestations of violence against women;

8. *Calls upon* the international community, including the United Nations system and, as appropriate, regional and subregional organizations, to support national

[9] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 189, No. 2545.

[10] Ibid., vol. 606, No. 8791.

efforts to promote the empowerment of women and gender equality in order to enhance national efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls, including, upon request, in the development and implementation of national action plans on the elimination of violence against women and girls, through, inter alia, and taking into account national priorities, official development assistance and other appropriate assistance, such as facilitating the sharing of guidelines, methodologies and best practices;

9. *Urges* States to integrate gender perspectives into the comprehensive national development plans and poverty eradication strategies that address social, structural and macroeconomic issues, and to ensure that such strategies address violence against women and girls, and urges the United Nations funds and programmes and specialized agencies and invites the Bretton Woods institutions to support national efforts in this regard;

10. *Also urges* States to ensure systematic collection and analysis of data on violence against women, including with the involvement of national statistical offices and, where appropriate, in partnership with other actors, taking note of the World Health Organization multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence against women and its recommendation to enhance capacity and establish systems for data collection to monitor violence against women;

11. *Urges* the United Nations bodies, entities, specialized agencies, funds and programmes and invites the Bretton Woods institutions, in accordance with their mandates, to support, upon request and within existing resources, the strengthening of national capacities and efforts on the collection, processing and dissemination of data, including data disaggregated by sex, age and other relevant factors, for their possible use for legislative, policy and programme development and in the national plans of action against all forms of violence against women;

12. *Notes* the work carried out for the elimination of all forms of violence against women by relevant United Nations bodies, entities, specialized agencies, funds and programmes, including those responsible for the promotion of gender equality and women's rights, and urges them and invites Bretton Woods institutions to:

(a) Enhance the coordination of and intensify their efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in a more systematic, comprehensive and sustained way, inter alia, through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality supported by the newly established Task Force on Violence against Women, in close collaboration with relevant civil society, including non-governmental organizations;

(b) Enhance coordination in a more systematic, comprehensive and sustained way in their assistance to States in their efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, including in the development or implementation of national action plans and, where appropriate, national development plans, including poverty reduction strategies where they exist, and programme-based and sector-wide approaches and in close collaboration with relevant civil society, including non-governmental organizations;

13. *Calls upon* the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality to consider ways and means to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women as a system-wide funding mechanism for preventing and redressing all forms of violence against women and girls;

14. *Strongly encourages* States to increase significantly their voluntary financial support for activities related to preventing and eliminating all forms of violence against women, the empowerment of women and gender equality carried out by the United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes, including the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women;

15. *Stresses* that within the United Nations system adequate resources should be assigned to those bodies, specialized agencies, funds and programmes responsible for the promotion of gender equality and women's rights and to efforts throughout the United Nations system to eliminate violence against women and girls;

16. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Human Rights Council and other relevant United Nations bodies to discuss, by 2008, within their respective mandates, the question of violence against women in all its forms and manifestations, bearing in mind the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the in-depth study on violence against women, and to set priorities for addressing this issue in their future efforts and work programmes and to transmit the outcome of those discussions to the Secretary-General for his annual report to the General Assembly;

17. *Requests* the Statistical Commission to develop and propose, in consultation with the Commission on the Status of Women, and building on the work of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, a set of possible indicators on violence against women in order to assist States in assessing the scope, prevalence and incidence of violence against women;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to establish a coordinated database, containing data provided by States, in particular national statistical offices, including, where appropriate, through relevant United Nations entities and other relevant regional intergovernmental organizations, disaggregated by sex, age and other relevant factors, on the extent, nature and consequences of all forms of violence against women, and on the impact and effectiveness of policies and programmes for, including best practices in, combating such violence;

19. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit an annual report to the General Assembly on the implementation of the present resolution, addressing the question of violence against women, and requests that the report include:

(a) At the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, information provided by the United Nations bodies, specialized agencies, funds and programmes on their follow-up activities to implement the resolution;

(b) At the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, information provided by States on their follow-up activities to implement the resolution;

20. *Decides* to continue its consideration of this question at its sixty-second session under the item entitled "Advancement of women".